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(*b*) whether there is any rule to the effect that unless certain prescribed amount is realized from excise auctions the sales must either be postponed or re-held; and

(*c*) whether the Government propose to make rules regarding the tapping and control of sweet juice?

A.—(*a*) The Government have not the information.

(*b*) The sales are in the first instance provisional and the Collector has power under condition V to accept or reject any bid at his discretion. If there is obvious combination and if no genuine bids are being received the selling officer may adjourn the sales.

(*c*) The necessary rules have already been made. The attention of the hon. Member is invited to the notification published on page 1207 of Part II of the *Fort St. George Gazette*, dated the 20th June 1916, and to the notification No. 211 published on pages 1170–71 of Part I of the *Fort St. George Gazette*, dated 31st July 1928.

Town-planning

Strengthening of the staff of the Town-planning department.

* 263 *Q.*—Mr. K. R. Karant: Will the hon. the Minister for Public Health be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether any, and if so, what action has been taken in the light of the suggestions made by me on 26th March 1928, to strengthen the staff of the Town-planning department; and

(*b*) whether the department or the Government have any, and if so, what proposals thereto?

A.—(*a*) & (*b*) The matter is under the consideration of the Government.

Mr. K. R. Karant:—"May I ask the hon. Minister to expedite the consideration so that some effective steps might be taken before framing the next year's budget?"

The hon. Mr. S. Muthiah Mudaliyar:—"We have asked for proposals and we are expecting them."

Agriculture

Experiments in the eradication of prickly-pear.

*264 *Q.*—Mr. A. Ranganatha Mudaliyar: Will the hon. the Minister for Development be pleased to state the results of the experiments so far carried out for the eradication of prickly-pear?

A.—No experiments have been so far carried out for the eradication of prickly-pear.

Mr. A. Ranganatha Mudaliyar:—"Is the hon. Member aware that experiments have been carried on in connexion with the utilization of prickly-pear into manure?"

The hon. Mr. M. R. Seturatnam Ayyar:—"As it is, the question is not clear whether it refers to the Local Government or the Government of India or foreign countries."